

SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA

and becoming entirely a new being."¹ Pietro di Giovanni Ven-tura tells us how, at the instance of his sister, he went to visit Catherine. He had not been to confession for seven years. " That virgin, raising her hands to heaven, then said : 'Pietro, I will take all thy sins upon myself, and do penance for them, and make satisfaction for them instead of thee. But I wish for this grace, Pietro, from thee—that thou confess thy sins.' To which I answered, saying : * It is only a few days since I confessed them.' And she : ' It is not so, for I know that it is seven years since thou wert confessed in the least.' And she added : ° Why wilt thou not go to confession ?' And, albeit I had told no one of that matter, nevertheless she manifested it all to me, and even the cause for which until then I had been unwilling to confess." ² After that meeting Pietro became one of Catherine's most devoted followers and disciples, and, though once, for a brief moment, he wavered and asked for a sign, he was one of the little band that shared her fortunes down to the end. It was, perhaps, a foreknowledge of that moment's weakness that made Catherine address him a beautiful letter upon love and perseverance in the service of the beloved.⁸

In northern Italy, Cardinal d'Estaing was strenuously carrying on hostilities against the Visconti: " he was a right valiant man," says the chronicler of Bologna, " and made more war upon the lords of Milan than any other legate who was here had done, save only him of Spain." ⁴ But the Tuscan Republics wavered between Bernabo and the Pope. At the beginning of November, 1373, two ambassadors from Bernabo and Galeazzo came to Siena. The latter seems to have soon returned to his master ; but Bernabo's envoy stayed on ° in the hostelry of the Ocha," until the following January, when, the Sienese regarding his presence as compromising, he was requested to leave the city, the Gonfaloniere of the Terzo di Camellia escorting him.

¹ *Contestatio Francisci de Malavoltis*, cap. iii., MS. cit., p. 440.

² *Contestotto Petri quondam Johannis Venture de Senls*, MS. cit., p. 482.

» Letter 47 (235).

⁴ *Cronica di Bologna*, col. 496.